

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1080

By Cepicky

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Kettle Mills Farm on being named the 2022 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly salute that most noble agricultural institution, the family farm, which serves as a cornerstone for our rural communities while providing food and fiber for Tennessee and beyond; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy family farm is the Kettle Mills Farm in Hampshire, Maury County, which is still owned and operated by members of the Anderson, Delk, and Kennedy family today and has been honored as the 2022 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the Century Farm Program was established to recognize the dedication and contributions of those families who have retained ownership of the same farm for more than a century, persevering through succeeding generations and coping with wars, floods, droughts, economic crises, and other obstacles presented by way of natural and human intervention; and

WHEREAS, the Kettle Mills Farm, property of the Anderson, Delk, and Kennedy family, was founded in 1810 by Richard "Kettle Dick" Anderson, who moved to Tennessee in 1810 and purchased 2,000 acres along the Duck River in Hampshire; and

WHEREAS, Kettle Dick was the father of twin daughters, Josephine Olivia Anderson, who married William Claiborne Kennedy, and Sarah Ophelia Anderson, who married Sam Crowell; the two couples were the second of many generations who would inhabit the farm at Kettle Mills; and

WHEREAS, upon his death, the Kennedys inherited the south side of Kettle Dick's farm, and the Delks inherited the north side; and

WHEREAS, in 1882, Kettle Dick's grandson, Richard Anderson Kennedy, built the first successful dam across the Duck River; and

WHEREAS, Richard Anderson Kennedy and John A. Delk also built a mill and general store on the west bank of the river; the mill, which in its early days ran both day and night, operated between 1882 and 1956 and was vital to the prosperity of area families; and

WHEREAS, the general store was first called Kennedy, Delk and Co. and later became Delk Brothers & Kennedy; J.R. Lovell eventually bought the mill and produced the well-known brand, Lovell's Best Flour; and

WHEREAS, Kettle Mills's public school was founded in the late 1800s and later met in a church that was built in 1887; today, the original church still stands proud, but the mill, dam, and general store have been lost to the ravages of time; and

WHEREAS, Sam Delk Kennedy III's great-great grandfather, William Leftwich Delk, was a breeder of mules and horses and sold hundreds of the animals to the U.S. Army during World War I; William's son, Dan Delk, and Dan's sons, Henry and Ken, were pioneers in the breeding of Tennessee Walking Horses; and

WHEREAS, William Leftwich Delk's daughter, Annie Porter Delk, married her neighbor from across the creek, Dr. Henry Grady Kennedy, a dentist and graduate of Vanderbilt who met his future wife while she was a student at what is now David Lipscomb University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Kennedy, who held his dental practice in the general store at one time, purchased some of the original farm from Annie Porter's cousins; their son, Sam Delk Kennedy I, became an attorney and the beloved publisher of *The Daily Herald*; and

WHEREAS, revered by his family as the storyteller of Kettle Mills farm, Sam I told many stories about the original home place, which sat on the hill of the eighty-acre tract that is still owned by his direct ancestors; today, the front path of buttercups is all that remains of the homeplace; and

WHEREAS, the valley of Kettle Mills Farm has been inhabited by many descendants of Kettle Dick Anderson over the years, including many familiar Maury County names; after the passing of Annie Porter Delk Kennedy, Sam "Delk" Kennedy II and his wife, Mary Susan, purchased some of the land back from cousins for his children, Sam Kennedy III and Mary Susan "Berry" Kennedy; and

WHEREAS, Sam Delk Kennedy III grew up on the Glendale farm before serving six years of active duty and seven years in the Reserve of the U.S. Navy; while serving his country, he dreamed of making the family farm at Kettle Mills work again; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Sam III and his wife, Rachel Vest, added almost 800 acres to the original eighty acres that have been in his family since 1810; in 2017, Sam and Rachel moved to Kettle Mills Farm, where today they are sheep and cattle farmers; and

WHEREAS, Sam III operates mainly a grazing operation of more than 500 head of sheep and more than 700 head of cattle; his love of agriculture is genetic, but his farming techniques were influenced by the books his dad sent him while he was in the Navy; and

WHEREAS, representing the eighth generation of his family to operate Kettle Mills Farm, Sam III considers himself to be a steward and conservationist of the land in Kettle Mills, just as his seven generations of ancestors were before him; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the members of the Anderson, Delk, and Kennedy family for their dedication to agriculture, recognizing the importance of the family farm to our rural communities and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor Sam Delk Kennedy III and Rachel Vest and the other members of the Anderson, Delk, and Kennedy family upon Kettle Mills Farm of

Hampshire being honored as the 2022 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year in recognition of its contributions to agriculture and Tennessee's history and heritage, and we extend to these fine citizens our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.